

REMARKS

The Specification has been amended. Claims 1, 4, 9, 12 - 13, 15, and 17 - 18 have been amended to clarify the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. No new matter has been introduced with these amendments, all of which are supported in the specification as originally filed. Claims 7 - 8, 11, 14, and 16 have been cancelled from the application without prejudice. Claims 1 - 6, 9 - 10, 12 - 13, 15, and 17 - 18 are now in the application.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Paragraph 5 of the Office Action dated June 2, 2006 (hereinafter, "the Office Action") states that Claims 8, 11, and 12 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if amended to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, the limitations of Claims 7 and 8 have been added to independent Claim 1 (and Claims 7 and 8 have been cancelled), and the limitations of Claim 11 have been added to independent Claim 9 (and Claim 11 has been cancelled). Accordingly, independent Claims 1 and 9 -- as well as their dependent Claims 2 - 6, 10, and 12 -- are now deemed to be allowable.

Furthermore, to place independent Claims 13, 15, 17, and 18 in condition for allowance, allowable subject matter indicated in the Office Action has been incorporated

therein. In particular,

- with regard to Claim 13, line 7 of independent Claim 13 specifies limitations analogous to those of original Claim 7; limitations from lines 2 - 3 of original Claim 8 are specified in lines 5 - 6 of Claim 13; limitations analogous to those in line 5 of Claim 8 are specified in lines 3 - 4 of Claim 13; limitations analogous to those in lines 6 - 10 of Claim 8 are specified in lines 9 - 14 of Claim 13; limitations analogous to those of original Claim 11 are specified in line 13 of Claim 13; and limitations analogous to those in lines 11 - 12 of Claim are specified in lines 14 - 15 of Claim 13. Thus, it can be seen that Claim 13 now specifies allowable subject matter;
- with regard to Claim 15, lines 4 - 5 of independent Claim 15 specify limitations analogous to those on lines 2 - 3 of original Claim 8; limitations analogous to those in line 5 of Claim 8 are specified in line 8 of Claim 15; limitations analogous to those in lines 6 - 10 of Claim 8 are specified in lines 8 - 12 of Claim 15; limitations analogous to those of original Claim 11 are specified in lines 12 - 13 of Claim 14; and limitations analogous to those in lines 11 - 12 of Claim are specified in lines 13 - 14 of Claim 15. Thus, it can be seen that Claim 15 now specifies allowable subject matter;
- with regard to Claim 17, this claim has been amended to specify limitations analogous to those of amended independent Claim 1 (thus incorporating limitations from allowable Claims 7 and 8), and Claim 17 is therefore deemed to

be allowable; and

- with regard to Claim 18, this claim has been amended in a similar manner as independent Claim 13 (thus specifying allowable subject matter from Claims 7, 8, and 11), and Claim 18 is therefore deemed to be allowable.

II. Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending rejected claims, withdrawal of all presently outstanding rejections, and allowance of all remaining claims at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

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